

**THE JACOBS REPORT**  
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**MICHIGAN SENATE**  
**Assistant Democratic Floor Leader**  
**FOURTEENTH DISTRICT**

For Immediate Release  
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**NEW CURRICULUM SIGNED INTO LAW**

**Standards Ushered in at Bipartisan Ceremony**

Legislative leadership gathered with Governor Jennifer Granholm at Lansing's Otto Middle School to greet the signing of Michigan's expanded high school graduation requirements. The new curriculum has been a focus of the Legislature since gaining unanimous support from the State Board of Education four months ago.

"We are taking a fundamental step in reforming Michigan's economy," said Gov. Granholm. "If Michigan is to compete in a global economy, we must have the best educated workforce in the nation to attract jobs and investment to our state."

Sen. Wayne Kuipers (R-Holland), chair of the Senate Education Committee, spoke directly to the students who attended the ceremony, describing the new standards as "tough and necessary."

"If you want to compete for the jobs in the 21st Century," continued Kuipers, "these are the skill sets you need."

The curriculum standards, which will apply to this fall's incoming eighth graders, include: four credits of math and English language arts; three credits of science and social studies; two credits of foreign language; one credit of physical education and health; one credit of visual, performing, or applied arts; and one online learning experience. Students are allowed to fulfill the foreign language requirement prior to entering high school, a provision available to this fall's third graders.

The only state-level curriculum requirement now is one semester of civics, with other graduation standards set by each district.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Michael Flanagan said one priority for the department will be to ensure the state has enough teachers with the appropriate training to enable schools to offer the courses demanded in the curriculum requirements. Of particular importance, he said, are mathematics and science teachers.

Senator Gilda Z. Jacobs (D-Huntington Woods) has introduced legislation (SB 1201) to address this need. She is currently in the process of finding private sponsors to fund the program.

**GRANHOLM ANNOUNCES TRANSPORTATION AGREEMENT**

**Projects Include Study of I-75 Expansion to 8 Mile Road**

A series of road construction projects promoted as a means of boosting job development were announced this week by Governor Jennifer Granholm, House Speaker Craig DeRoche (R-Novi) and Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema (R-Wyoming). The projects that stretch from the Upper Peninsula to the Detroit area are expected to total some \$400 million.

In a release, Ms. Granholm said the agreements, part of her Jobs Today program, will make grants available to local communities for investments to match available federal funding.

The announcement is “about driving job creation in Michigan and paving the way for growth all across our state,” Gov. Granholm said.

Sen. Sikkema said that infrastructure development is critical to economic investment in the state. “This agreement will accomplish many goals vital to bringing Michigan out of its economic slump and getting her people working again,” he said.

While most of the funding will go for road and bridge projects, the agreement also includes restoring \$1 million to Amtrak thus forestalling the possibility to passenger service would end some of its runs.

The biggest project is a \$31 million proposal to build a US-131 bypass near Constantine, as well as acquiring land for more lanes in the future.

Another \$10 million will go for the Wixom Road Interchange in Oakland County, and another \$10 million will go for a study of expansion of I-75 from M-59 to Eight Mile Road in Oakland County.

The Legislature is expected to pass the legislation regarding all the projects in the coming weeks.

## **NAZI RALLY WILL PROCEED WITH METAL DETECTORS, FENCING Cost to Taxpayers: \$200,000**

Preparations to contain tomorrow’s Neo-Nazi rally in downtown Lansing are in full swing following Ingham Circuit Court Judge Paula Manderfield’s ruling in favor of the state and city’s plans to erect a chain link fence around the Capitol perimeter, close streets to vehicle traffic and to run each visitor through a metal detector and weapons screening.

The city argued that the safety measures were desperately needed. Bill White, spokesperson for the Minnesota-based Neo-Nazi National Socialist Movement, said that the searches were unconstitutional and could distract supporters from attending the rally.

Judge Manderfield denied the Nazi’s request for an injunction.

The fence, a chain link variety with two separate areas - one for NSM supporters and one for the opposition - was the first visual clue that the Capitol will be hosting a contentious gathering this weekend. Installation of the fence began Thursday morning and today the Capitol lawn looks like a prison holding ground.

The separation tactic, as well as many of the other plans, such as using “amnesty barrels” for those who want to take advantage of a last chance to pitch weapons without punishment, were also used when the state hosted the Ku Klux Klan rallies in 1994, said Jerry Lawler, executive director of the Michigan Capitol Committee.

Shanon Akans, State Police spokesperson, said next to come will be the street blockades, set to go up at around 6 a.m. on Saturday in preparation for the 2 p.m. rally, which is scheduled to end at 4 p.m.

Before and during the rally, only pedestrian traffic entering at permitted points will have access to the downtown area. Those checkpoints are at Capitol Avenue and Ottawa Street; at the 100 block of East Michigan Avenue in front of the police building and at Capitol Avenue, south of Allegan Street.

State police will man the Capitol lawn, with metal detector duties and weapons searches, while Lansing police will be posted around the downtown area to enforce blockades and pedestrian entrance points.

Most, if not all, downtown shops and restaurants will be voluntarily closed to avoid the fracas.

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State Senator Gilda Jacobs represents the 14<sup>th</sup> Senate District, which includes Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Ferndale, Franklin, Hazel Park, Huntington Woods, Lathrup Village, Oak Park, Pleasant Ridge, Royal Oak Township, Southfield, and Southfield Township. She is the Minority Vice Chair of the Families & Human Services Committee and the Economic Development, Small Business & Regulatory Reform Committee. She also serves on the Government Operations and Health Policy Committees.

**Constituents of the 14<sup>th</sup> District may contact Senator Jacobs at [sengjacobs@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:sengjacobs@senate.michigan.gov) or toll-free at 1-888-937-4453.**

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